

CITY OF REDMOND

The City's Strategic Planning Retreat

Friday and Saturday, 11-12 March 2005
Alderbrook Lodge, Union, Washington

DRAFT SUMMARY

of the Key Discussions, Decisions and Agreements

Facilitator's Note: This document summarizes the key discussions, decisions and agreements of the strategic planning retreat of the seven Redmond City Councilmembers, Mayor Ives and the Strategic Leadership Team held at Alderbrook Lodge in Union, Washington on Friday afternoon and evening, 11 March 2005, and the following day, Saturday, the 12th.

COUNCIL AND SLT REACH AN UNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR COLLECTIVE FUTURE VISION

This year's retreat had three goals, one of which was to confirm that the City's leadership has the same view of the community's future and is moving in a common direction. By the end of Friday evening, the group had achieved this goal. How did we get there? Through these four steps:

1. SLT members, playing the role of the Council, articulated what we want the City to be in 5-10 years.
2. Councilmembers, playing the role of the SLT, asked questions to clarify what we heard so that we could more accurately understand "the Council's" vision.
3. In debriefing the role-play exercise, we all compared what had been said and heard to the Redmond Comprehensive Plan vision and the vision defined by the Council and Mayor through pillars and strategies during the March 2004 retreat.
4. During the post-dinner discussion, we agreed that the Comprehensive Plan vision, the pillars and strategies, and the direction articulated on Friday afternoon are consistent and compatible, and constitute our common vision for the City.

The following is the vision articulated during Friday afternoon's discussion for the community and for City government. It is followed by the three pillars from the March 2004 retreat, the mutual interests that were the foundation for them, and the eleven strategies that were also produced during the 2004 retreat. (Missing from this compilation of the City leadership team's vision is the Comprehensive Plan vision statement.)

The Community of Redmond in the Next Ten Years:

- continues to be greater
- sustainable
- physically beautiful: its buildings and streets, for example, are well-maintained
- natural environment is beautiful and well-maintained and reflects the community's affluence
- citizens take pride in the community
- it's a desirable place to live, work and raise children
 - prosperous, attracting business and other kinds of investments
- family, youth and ethnic-friendly: diverse groups feel Redmond is home
- citizens see public service as honorable, harkening back to the Kennedy administration's era
- "together we create a community of good neighbors" is still on people's lips and is further defined by: civility (what can I do for the community?), community (what can we all do together for the community?), and sustainability (measures the quality of life in economic, environmental and social needs of the community)
- city celebrates its successes along the way
- strong sense of self throughout the community
- destination for tourism, employment, shopping and recreation
- help our fellow citizens, such as new Americans, be successful
- people are energized, enthusiastic and excited about the possibilities, as evidenced by every public meeting or forum is packed with people wanting to participate
- city is in good shape, whether it has remained within its current borders or expanded beyond them
- citizens are safe as they go about their daily lives
- a sense that the best is yet to come/people feel their creativity is nurtured and valued by the community
- democracy is alive and well in Redmond
- disagreements are civil
- Redmond is a significant city
- maintenance is recognized as a key part of successfully addressing growth; well-maintained translates into stability, which translates into a high quality of life
- people can walk all over the community
- the city has more parks and recreational opportunities so residents do not need to leave Redmond to recreate

City Government in the Next Ten Years:

- leadership (the Council and SLT) come together
- see the long-term
- provide high level of service
- trendsetters
- flexible so to meet the challenges
- attracts the best and brightest
- provide the leadership others seek
- employer of choice
- creatively reward employee performance while remaining financially responsible
- city employees see their public service as honorable as during the days of the Kennedy administration
- staff is valued, encouraged to contribute and is part of the process and its solutions
- city celebrates successes along the way
- innovative
- competitive

- even more involved regionally
- resources are available to move the City forward, not just patch things up
- successful in a thoughtful, not random, way
- have examined what we are doing and the ways in which we are doing it, making sure we are adding value and using our resources in the most effective and efficient manner
- have clear priorities
- continue to be talented and more fully develop and utilize those talents to strengthen our teamwork

The Pillars and Mutual Interests:

COMMUNITY:

Strengthen existing and create new connections between people. Build community at the intersections of common interests.

We define those intersections as home, work, and places to play, worship, learn and shop. They also include an understanding of what we have in common.

Our Common Interests in Community:

- Create people-to-people connections within neighborhoods and citywide.
- Preserve Redmond's unique character, as well as that of its neighborhoods.
- Address physical and "understanding" intersections.
- Target resources to enhance the intersections and strengthen or create connections.
- Do not divide the community through the actions of the City.
- Recognize that downtown may be the City's biggest and/or central intersection.

REGIONALISM:

Strengthen Redmond's connections to and relationships with other communities. Strengthen what is unique about Redmond, while recognizing we need not be or provide everything that other communities in the region are or provide.

We define regionalism as: a perspective; our involvement in regional issues and forums; our relationships and partnerships with neighboring cities; and our relationships and partnerships with federal, state and county agencies.

Our Common Interests in Regionalism:

- Strengthen our relationships and partnerships with neighboring communities.
- Influence regional decisions and actions to enhance the quality of life of Redmond citizens.
- Strengthen the qualities, characteristics and amenities that make Redmond unique and different, while recognizing the unique characters, amenities and services of nearby communities.
- Recognize that Redmond provides regional services, such as parks, employment and shopping.
- Address the devolution of responsibility from the Federal, State and County governments to the local level of government.

DIVERSITY:

Take advantage of Redmond's increasing diversity. Draw all our residents, with their diverse backgrounds, cultures and opinions, into our community's life. Create and strengthen civic engagement by encouraging, promoting and celebrating diversity.

We define diversity as the ethnic, racial, cultural, socioeconomic and age diversity within the City's population. It is also the diverse look and "feel" of the City and its neighborhoods. And it is the diversity of thought and opinion reflected in our citizens.

Our Common Interests in Diversity:

- Help make the citizens of Redmond feel welcomed and become engaged in the community.
- Enable residents from different countries and cultures to become comfortable in American society and involved in the community.
- Foster diversity of thought and opinion to strengthen civic engagement.
- Preserve the diverse look and feel of the City's neighborhoods.
- Encourage, promote and celebrate diversity.

The Strategies:

1. Foster a work environment that supports the continuous development and success of our employees while achieving the City's goals and objectives.
2. Deliver high quality core city services.
3. Provide choices to effectively move people, goods and services in, around and out of the City.
4. Use the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad right-of-way to benefit the community.
5. Foster vibrant, diverse and connected economic centers.
6. Create and connect neighborhoods.
7. Work with other governments and neighboring cities to efficiently deliver services and provide facilities.
8. Strengthen and enhance the sense of "place" and community.
9. Create and strengthen civic engagement by encouraging, promoting and celebrating diversity.
10. Assess and maintain fair, equitable and stable sources of revenue.
11. Encourage the community to embrace environmental ethics.

COUNCIL AND SLT REACH AGREEMENT ON AN OUTLINE OF LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Consensus on an outline of a long-term financial strategy was the second major agreement of the retreat. The group recognizes that there are refinements yet to be done before the outline can be finalized and approved by the Council and SLT. Those steps are identified in the next section of this summary. For now, here is the draft outline of the long-term financial strategy.

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Contents</u>
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I.	OUR VISION about the community and its government.
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Reiterates our common vision as defined by the Comprehensive Plan, the pillars and strategies, and the additional concepts from the March 2005 retreat.

II.	THE CURRENT SITUATION
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Defines the existing financial situation and by doing so, factually establishes the gap between revenues and expenditures.

A. Existing Revenues

B. Current Service Levels

III.	REVENUES
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A. Philosophy:

1. As part of understanding and investigation, what is the cost of achieving our vision? How do we pay for it?

B. Current Reality:

1. As part of understanding and investigation, what funding sources are available to us to fund our vision?
 - a. existing revenues
 - b. reserves
 - c. potential new funding sources

C. Options:

1. Achieve our vision with the existing revenues?
2. Achieve it through efficiencies that enable us to maintain existing revenues or reduce revenue?
3. Achieve it by increasing revenues?

D. Tentative Decisions or Actions (both short- and long-term):

1. Should the Council act or make a tentative decision? If so, what is it?
2. Should the voters make the decision? If so, what decision would we need them to make?
3. If the voters make the decision by saying “no,” what is our alternative or back-up plan?

IV. RESERVES

A. Philosophy:

1. As part of understanding and investigation, what should be our policy and/or practices regarding the amount of revenue to be kept in reserve and/or the use of reserves to fill gaps?

B. Current Reality:

1. As part of investigation and understanding, what reserves are available to help pay the costs of achieving our vision?
2. What, if anything, are they currently intended for?
3. What are the implications of using them?

C. Options:

1. Achieve our vision in a way that maintains the existing reserves?
2. Achieve it through efficiencies that enable us to maintain existing reserves?
3. Achieve the vision by using a portion of those reserves?

D. Tentative Decisions or Actions (both short- and long-term):

1. Should the Council act or make a tentative decision? If so, what is it?
2. Should the voters make the decision? If so, what is the decision we would need them to make?
3. If the voters make the decision by saying “no,” what is our alternative or back-up plan?

V. SERVICE LEVELS

A. Philosophy:

1. As part of understanding and investigation, what service level should the City provide to achieve our vision?

B. Current Reality:

1. As part of investigation and understanding, what service levels are we providing today?
2. What are our citizens saying about the current level of service? Are they content/satisfied with it? Do they require a higher level of service? Or a lower level of service?

C. Options:

1. Achieve our vision with the existing level of service?
2. Achieve it with a lower level of service?
3. Achieve it by increasing the level of service?

D. Tentative Decisions or Actions (both short- and long-term):

1. How do we determine what the citizens want regarding level of service?
2. Should the Council act or make the decisions? If so, what is it?

3. Should the voters make a decision? If so, how do we determine what level of service the citizens need or want?
4. If the voters tell us “no,” what is our alternative or back-up plan?

VI. DECIDING HOW TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION

In this chapter we take the information (including data on what the citizens are willing to pay and what levels of service they want or need) and tentative conclusions, actions or decisions from earlier conversations (as reflected in the previous chapters) to outline the alternatives available to us and to have a healthy, robust debate about them. As a result of this discussion and debate, the decision is made by the Council.

Options may include: reduce levels of service and, therefore, reduce revenues and expenditures; maintain existing service levels but reduce costs and, perhaps, revenues and expenditures; maintain levels of service and increase revenues to pay for rising costs; increase levels of service (do more?) and, therefore, increase revenues and expenditures; and variations of these and other alternatives.

The important point is this: All the alternatives will be under consideration (nothing is sacred) and will be understood, investigated, discussed and debated. The decision will be made in a manner that involves the City’s leadership and make all its members equally accountable.

NEXT STEPS, INCLUDING COMMITMENTS, IN FINALIZING THE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Following agreement on the draft outline of the long-term financial strategy, we discussed the next steps in developing and finishing it. These are the additional agreements that emerged from the final discussion of the retreat:

1. **All of us on the Council are committed to making this one of the 2-4 highest priorities of 2005.**
 - Among the other highest priorities are completion of the Transportation Management Plan and the Critical Areas Ordinance.
2. **We intend to finish the long-term financial strategy by 22 November 2005, but we also agree that completing it sooner—within six months—would be beneficial to the City and its residents.**
3. **All of us—Council and SLT members—are committed to working in partnership to develop, agree on and implement the long-term financial strategy.**
4. **The SLT will identify the other top priorities for the year and present to the Council an analysis of the impact of this priority on our ability to launch and/or complete them.**
 - As part of this process, the Council will ask if there are things it is currently doing that it does not need to do, and if there are things it wanted the Administration to finish or launch in 2005 that either do not need to be done or could be delayed? We will also scrutinize our agendas to

determine if there may be ways of inserting into our existing meeting schedule the time to get this initiative done.

5. **As part of the process of refining the outline of the long-term financial strategy and finalizing the process by which it will be completed, we will consider whether or not we need to hire a consultant or facilitator to assist us. We will also more clearly outline our roles and responsibilities as we move forward to complete this.**
6. **We appointed four “managing partners” to refine the outline of the financial strategy and the process by which we will develop and complete it, and bring their recommendations back to the Council and SLT within the next couple weeks. The “managing partners,” listed in alphabetical order, are Lenda Crawford, Tim Fuller, John Marchione and Tom Paine.**

In addition to these six agreements, we all committed to the following:

- ☐ A “no action alternative” will be among the options considered as a result of following the outline of the long-term financial strategy. It may not be labeled this because, as was discussed during the retreat, no action is an action, but an alternative that calls for no increase in service levels and revenues, and which, therefore, could result in reducing them and expenditures, will be considered by the group.
- ☐ We are all in this together and thus are equally accountable and responsible for the success of the process of developing the long-term financial strategy, and for its accurate and successful implementation. We will not blame one another during times of “rough sledding;” rather, we will work in good faith to more effectively and accurately understand each other, and to form a real partnership in developing and implementing this strategy.
- ☐ If the Council is not pleased with or suspicious of information provided by the Administration, or if Councilmembers find themselves making certain assumptions about the SLT’s interests, motives or actions, they will express this to the SLT so that the desired information can be provided and the SLT members have the opportunity to dispel incorrect assumptions and get facts “on the table.” And if as a result of this process the Council decides to make cuts in service levels, revenues and expenditures, the members will provide the opportunity to SLT members to tell them what that looks and feels like as a department director, i.e., what are the implications for the departments and employees?